

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-2 (Canceled)

3. (currently amended) A method for producing a positive electrode active material for non-aqueous electrolyte sodium secondary battery which comprises heating a metal compound mixture containing mainly a sodium compound and an iron compound at a temperature in the range from 400°C to 900°C to produce a composite oxide containing mainly a sodium compound and an iron compound,

wherein the mixture is heated in an inert atmosphere ~~at an~~ in the temperature range of lower than 100°C in the course of rising of the temperature to said temperature range from 400°C to 900°C, and

wherein the resulting composite oxide is suitable for a non-aqueous electrolyte sodium secondary battery.

4. (previously presented) A non-aqueous electrolyte sodium secondary battery comprising a positive electrode active material, wherein the positive electrode active material comprises a composite oxide containing mainly iron and sodium, having a hexagonal crystal structure, and exhibiting a value of 2 or less obtained by dividing the XRD peak intensity corresponding to an interplanar spacing of 2.20 Å by the XRD peak intensity corresponding to an interplanar spacing of 5.36 Å, and charge carriers are sodium ions.

5. (previously presented) A non-aqueous electrolyte sodium secondary battery according to claim 4, wherein the composite oxide is represented by the formula $\text{NaFe}_{1-x}\text{M}_x\text{O}_2$ (where M is at least one element selected from the group consisting of trivalent metals, and x satisfies $0 \leq x < 0.5$).